



RIVERSIDE'S YOUTH COUNCIL ADVISOR RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD

Riverside, CA – City of Riverside Youth Council Advisor Connie Howard Leach received the National Child Labor Committee's prestigious Lewis Hine Award on January 29, 2007 in New York City. A panel of distinguished judges from corporations, nonprofits, and foundations selected award honorees from hundreds of nominations submitted by governors, mayors, CEOs, and nonprofit leaders from across the country.

"Connie Howard Leach is nothing less than a powerhouse when it comes to advocating and empowering the City's youth," said Mayor Ronald O. Loveridge. "As a person with remarkable charisma, Connie has established a bond with hundreds of youth, inspiring them to further pursue their aspirations." Ms. Howard Leach is one of 10 individuals nationwide who are being honored for making a lasting commitment to the well-being, growth, and development of children and youth.

Ms. Howard Leach was honored for her efforts over more than 20 years to devise ways to empower youth and help adults understand the important role that youth play in the community. The panel of judges chose Ms. Leach because of her work with the Riverside Youth Council to create a Youth Court, *Teen Scene Riverside* -- a television show produced by the Youth Council -- as well as her role in creating and directing Riverside's Multi-Cultural Youth Festival.

Ms. Howard Leach directs the efforts of the Riverside Youth Council, a group of high school students who advise the Mayor and Council on issues relevant to young people. Every year Ms. Howard Leach and the Youth Council organize the City's annual Multi-Cultural Youth Festival, "How Big is Your World?" The Festival is designed to reach across racial and ethnic boundaries to find common ground, promoting tolerance and understanding among Riverside's diverse groups of youth. This festival, which has grown every year, was attended by 15,000 visitors in 2006.

Working with the Youth Council, Ms. Leach has also successfully brought a Youth Court to Riverside. Now in its third year, Youth Court has adjudicated approximately 300 cases, trained 600 youth volunteers to serve as jurors, and recruited 75 adults to serve as judges and attorney mentors. This year, the Riverside Youth Council will produce its own TV show, "Teen Scene Riverside," which will feature young people addressing self-identified topics of importance.

"The City of Riverside is proud of its young people, and we are delighted that the National Child Labor Committee has chosen to honor Ms. Howard Leach's committed and motivational energy which creates new and exciting opportunities for Riverside's young residents," concluded Mayor Loveridge.

Named for acclaimed photographer **Lewis Wickes Hine**, the awards were established by the **NCLC** in 1985. This year marks the 21st anniversary of the awards. In the early 20th century, **Hine** worked for the **NCLC** using his camera to document child labor conditions in the workplace. After viewing more than 10,000 of **Hine's** unsettling images of children--laboring in sweatshops, coal mines, textile mills, and on farms--Americans were stirred to take action to enact state and federal laws to protect the rights of children in the workplace.

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